

THE TRIAL OF A CHRISTIANS ESTATE:

OR

A DISCOVERIE OF THE CAUSES,
degrees, signes and differences of the Apostasie
both of true Christians and false:

IN

A SERMON PREACHED IN LONDON
by Master PAUL BAYNE, and afterward sent in
writing by him to his friend W.F.



AT LONDON

Imprinted by *Felix Kyngston*, for *Nathanael Newbery*, and
are to be sold at his shop vnder S. Peters Church in
Cornhill, and in Popes head Alley.

1618.

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by Master P. A. W. F.
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Imprinted by Felix Knapton, for Widdowes, Newbery and
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1688.



TO THE READER.



*Christian Reader, good Wine needeth
no garland, it will praise it selfe: so
(I perswade my selfe) will this ensu-
ing Sermon, which a learned, holy
and faithfull seruant of God for-
merly viua voce in publique, soun-
ded in the eares of me and many,
and afterwards, as a token of his
Christian loue to me, bestowed upon me in writing, which
being so fruitfull and necessarie a labour, in the iudgement
of the godly and learned that haue seene it, and so specially
befitting these luke-warme and backsliding times, I thought
I could not, without preiudice to thee, suffer it to lie by me
for my priuate instruction and benefit alone, and therefore
for thy good, the keeping in precious memorie the Preacher
thereof, whom the Lord hath gathered into his barne, and
for the glorie of God especially, I haue consented that it be
made more publique and common, by comming vnder the
presse. The Lord grant, that it may haue that successe in
mee and thee, which hee that gaue first life vnto it in study-
ing, and brought it forth by preaching, intended, and I in
consenting and causing to haue it printed, desire: so shall
the feeble, weake and doubting Christian, be taken by the
band, staid and comforted against the feares of totall back-
sliding*

TO THE READER.

sliding, and we all shall be of the number of them which follow faith to the conservation of our soules: which the Lord for Iesus Christ his sake grant. Amen.

Thine in his best desires,

W.F. THE READER

blind, lame, and comforted against the fear of total back-
the feeble, weak and doubting Christian, be taken by the
consoling and causing to have it printed, where so shall
ing, and brought in forth by preaching, intended, and I in
me and there, which he it is that in the case it is study-
press. The Lord grant, that it may have that success in
ward more faithful and constant, by coming under the
for the spirit of God especially, who have comforted that it be
thereof, upon the Lord's hand, which is his power, and
for the good, the blessing in your and memory the preacher
for my private instruction, and benefit alone, and therefore
I commend, without prejudice to the, suffer it to be by you
of the Lord's hand, that have been in, and especially
being in spiritual and natural labor, in the judgments
Christian love to me, & love upon me in writing, which
and afterwards, as a token of his
sent to the care of the end many,
may a viva voce, in your day, your
and faithful servant of God for-
ing between, which is learned, duly
(I perceive my self) with this copy.
no gratitude, it will praise it self: Is
Christian Reader, Good Night and adieu

I
**THE TRIAL OF
A CHRISTIANS
Estate.**

HEBR. 10. vers. 39.

But we are not they which withdraw our selues into perdition, but follow faith vnto the conseruation of the soule.

THE Apostle hauing in the verse before, remembred the fearefull estate of such who through vnbeleefe are withdrawne from God, doth in this verse preuent a scruple which might arise in some timorous consciences, doubting whether they were not in this case next before threatened. Hee doth therefore take such weake ones by the hand, strengthening them, by bearing them witnesse of their condition, manifested by the fruites aboue mentioned, verse 32. 33. 34: which estate is set downe here in this verse: First negatiuely, by deniall of their vnbeleeuing reuolt. Secondly affirmatiuely, by auouching their perseuerance in faith. Either of these properties of vnbeleefe and beleefe, being amplified from the effects which accompanied them, viz. destruction of the

the soule (for that is to be vnderstood from the latter clause) and saluation of the same.

The summe of the words. Feare not though I tell you that backsliders are vessels of no delight, for your selues with my selfe, are not such who steale from our companies, leauing our militarie profession, which would turne in this life and the life to come to our further destruction; but we continue in faith, and put forth our beleefe more and more, as occasion requirerh, which bringeth vs here and euerlastingly to see the Lords saluation.

Now for the instructions which both the scope and matter of the verse include in them. First that *Paul* doth confirme them by bearing them witnesse of their estate. It doth teach vs, that we must stablisch our weake brethren, by bearing them record of the graces wrought in them; wee who haue found grace must confirme others. If any thing more smart be vttered, we must mollifie it with such wise preuention as Physicians, if they foresee ought harmefull to the bodie, they correct it with other ingredients, that it may wholesomely be receiued. If we saw one ready to trip, wee would reach him a hand and sustaine him from falling: much more must wee shew this loue to the soule shaking through frailtie. This wisdom Christ vsed, he quenched not the smoaking flaxe: the seasonable testifying to men their good things causeth them to take increase: our honour of them, our dutie to the comfort of their liues and to the truth, doth require it. Such therefore are to be taxed who wanting this prudence, handle the word in diuiding it like him in the Emblem, who gaue to the Asse a bone, to the dogge straw: such are those Pastors who discourage
good

Observat. 1.

Reason 1.

2

Vse 1.

good deuotions, and incourage men carnally minded, like vnto them wee reade of, *Ezechiel*, chap. 13. 22. Such againe are they amongst priuate Christians, who like *Iobs* friends are a breaking to them, whom they should comfort and confirme.

Secondly, we must be prouoked by this example to incourage weake ones when they are doubting of their estates: for as a timorous patient imagining twentie euils, when his Physitian assureth him that his case is nothing so, is well satisfied: so here.

Againe, in that hee saith, Wee are not they that withdraw. Hence wee are giuen to vnderstand, that some may fall away from the graces receiued. In some manner Gods owne children and others are reported to haue fallen: *David, Saul, Peter, Alexander, &c.* But that this may be more distinctly opened, three things must be considered.

1. First, from what the godly truly sanctified may fall; how farre other.
2. Secondly, from whence falls come, and the difference of them.
3. Thyrdly, what are the symptomes or signes of a state declining from God.

To the first, a man not hauing the true grace of the elect, may fall from all outward priuileges, which hee holdeth as a member of the visible Church. Secondly, from the effects of his grace in life and conuersation. Thirdly, from the very habituall gifts, which were the fountaine whence his fruites flowed. Thus he may come to be twice dead, and in worse case then cuer.

The Lords chosen may fall from their outward prerogatiues, and from the fruites: but that diuine nature

still abideth in them, and it is only with their graces, as it is with the minde in distempers of melancholie, and phrensie; with the Sunne in eclipses; with the tree when leaues and fruites faile it; with the naturall life when it moueth not, ne yet breatheth sensible: which in diseases of the Mother is often discerned. Their faith is a neuer failing faith; their life an eternal life; their seede a seede abiding in them.

causes of defe-
ction.

Now for the second, viz. what are the causes of falling away, and that so diuersly; this opened will lend a more thorough light to the former. The causes which worke in withdrawing vs are inward or outward. But the varietie of these declinings springeth chiefly from the inward.

The cause in the Lords children is, the state of their grace, which is such as hath still reliques of sinne dwelling with it.

The cause of the others totall fall is, an essentiall defect in their grace, which reacheth not to make a true vnion betwixt Christ and them, nor yet to produce true sanctification. In a word, the cause of the ones perseuering, and the others totall deficiencie, is not only to be taken from Gods power and gracious pleasure, from Christ his intercession, from the stinting of Satan to the heele of the true Christian seede: but also from the essentiall qualification, and disposition of the grace bestowed vpon either. But this is a difficultie further to be cleered; How wee may formally distinguish these gifts which are in the Christian that perseuereth, from those that are in him that temporiseth. The difference is double:

1. First in the vnion which is made by them.
2. Secondly, in the different pro^uocations which follow.

follow vpon so different manners of being vnited with Christ.

To open the first, is set downe this conclusion: The spirituall gift of the temporiser doth meereley enlighten him to see Christ, but doth not moue his will to goe vnto Christ, as giuen him of God, that he might not perish but haue eternall life. His application is an ouerweening hope, taken vp by his own presumption; it is not a motion which the spirit doth elicit and draw out, but such as is his enlightning.

In the word of Christ are two things: first the truth of it, a true word: secondly, the goodnesse of it, a good word. That this may be apprehended, God giueth his chosen not onely an apprehension, in the vnderstanding of the truth, and goodnesse of it; but a motion of affiance, which maketh the soule goe to, and claspe about Christ whom it beholdeth. Hence it is that coming and beleeuing, *Iohn 1.12. Iohn 6.35.37.* is apprehending, as when a thing is taken by the handle: and from this propertie of faith, doth come that internall vnion twixt the beleeuer and Christ, which maketh them dwell mutually one in the other. Hence it is that the true beleeuer doth more affect Christ, prize him, ioy in him, more then the benefits by him.

Now the Papists faith is a meere enlightning, not hauing any confidence within the compasse of it, (for a man may be found in their faith, and in damnable despaire at the same instant) and the temporisers faith hauing no more then an apprehension in the vnderstanding of the good word of saluation, ioyned with presumptuous perswasion and fallible hopes conceiued by himselfe on false reckonings: these cannot innerly vnite him with Christ; but looke as a Wenne is

so vnited in the bodie by the skinne incompassing it, and some kinde of continuation with the other members; but hath not sinewes, nerues, arteries shot into it from head and heart, as the other parts: so these by their common illumination and profession haue conjunction with the bodie, but want the influence of that more neere ligament of that affianced motion of the will, which only floweth from Christ into his proper members. And this is the first ground of their after failing: for looke as standing waters, or neuer such torrents which haue no head of liuing springing waters to feed them, cannot in time but drie vp: so these not hauing Christ, the Well-head of all grace, whatsoever is in them, in time fadeth and vanisheth to nothing.

From defect of internall vnion, which is as it were the fountaine, commeth a difference in grace deriued. The temporisers, being such as doth neuer truly humble him, such, as is superficiall, insincere: in a word, such as doth not truly sanctifie him: by reason of which defect, it is not permanent.

First, not being within the gracious light of this Sunne of righteousness, the depth of his wound is neuer gaged, and though hee know much humiliation, yet he is neuer truly humbled. First he seeth not with humble conscioufnes the sinfull deprauation of his nature: his displeasure is more against the fruites, then rootes whence they issued. *Paul* a Pharisee knew not concupiscence; a *Papist* acknowledgeth not this as sinfull after he is once baptized, whereas this was the highest pitch of *Pauls* and *Dauids* penitentiall exercise.

Obiect.

But may not the temporiser know and maintaine the

the truth of this doctrine, yea propound it fruitfully to others? *Ans.* He may (by faith infused) conceiue and assent to it, yea deliuer it to others, but so that the power of it doth not reflect on himselfe, so as to be humbled in this respect: but as the Moone giueth vs light which is not rooted in the body of her, for that continueth darksome: so they receiue light from Gods word, and set it forth to others, but haue none in themselves. Secondly, not being within grace, his confession and passion vnder sinne is not free and voluntary, but extorted either from some euidence of light, or fact euincing him; as *Saul* to *Dauid* confessed; or the racke of Gods terrors enforcing it from him. Whereas the children of God, who now see that the more their sin is, the more grace superabounded; that their basenes is his glorie whose grace they liue vnder, they frankly, yea delightfully humble themselves in confessing their vilenesse. Thirdly, not being within the grace of Christ with sound affiance, he neuer grieueth at sinne as it is enmitie against his God: for to be contrite in this regard, implieth a loue to God, which cannot bee in him who hath not found God louing him first: he is vexed at his sinnes in respect of his miseries hee seeth imminent, or only as they are worldward, shamefull aberrations from practise of such apparant vertues, which men may repute glorious, and much affect. In a word, hee is neuer truly humbled, which his obedience being partiall doth witnesse; for he will take and leaue in that which hee heareth at his owne pleasure: yea if crosses come, he is too proud to humble himselfe vnder Gods hand: he is lifted vp aboue others, whom hee out-strippeth in common graces: he is censorious, without conscience of that natu-

Ans.

2

3

rall condition vnder sinne, which is common to him with others. And from hence it is, that at length his grace faileth: for as a house builded on the sands, without a due ground-worke laid; or plants vnrooted cannot endure: so this frame which wanteth the foundation and roote of graces, (such as humilitie is) cannot persist.

- 2 Secondly, I say from this prime defect of inner vnion, all the temporisers graces produced are superficiall, sleight, full of ouerture: whereas those in sound beleeuers are solid, substantiall, not *res intrinsecus defectuosa*, things which though outwardly they haue the appearance, yet are inwardly defectiue. Hence it is that *Paul* calleth their godlinesse, a figure of godlinesse, *2. Tim. 3. 5.* their knowledge an externall forme of knowledge, *Rom. 2. 20.* that *Christ* maketh all they haue, a semblance, a seeming only, *Luke 8. 18*: for looke as a wilde herbe, though it haue the name and common nature, yet it differeth much from one which groweth in gardens, better manured and dressed: and as a blew, died with blackwood, though it seeme brighter a while, yet is not so substantiall as that which is woaded (and therefore wee say it is a true colour): so here though the graces of the temporiser haue the same name and common nature, (for they are inferior works of the spirit) yea though they may exceed in shew, yet for the truth and substance, they are nothing to those that are wrought in honest hearts; and from hence come two things.

- I First, their graces are soone growne vp; for a thing superficiall is done in halfe the time that a substantiall thing is in working. They get the start: and, while many a true heart before them in the Lord is complaining

ning of wants, and weaknesse, sinful inclinations, vsurping in them; they are carried, as it were, *per saltum*, to their perfection. But as a true birth, though slowly at the first, yet still taketh increase, whereas a mole groweth faster at the first, but soone ceaseth: and looke as in nature, things the soonest ripe, are the soonest rotten: So it fareth with these leap-Christians.

Secondly, I say their graces are insincere, their hearts are neuer purged from some sinne which they loue and like to liue in, for sinister ends intertaining the message of Gods mercie, which is not, that they may reuerence him, and serue him all their daies without slauish terror: but they gladly heare it, as hoping that they haue a protection by it, though they hold on in their own courses. For this it is that the elects faith, which neuer faileth, is called a faith without hypocrisie; that the true beleeuers is onely said to haue an honest heart.

As God hath made some remedies in nature such as purge vniuersally euery peccant humour, as the Physitians Catholicon, &c. some againe that purge *cum delectu*, that expell choler, but meddle not with melancholic; flegme, but stirre not choler: So this medicine of grace, which God infuseth into an honest heart, it is a Catholique expeller of all knowne sinne, great or little. The grace of the temporiser purgeth out the roote of no sinne; represseth the mouing and paroxismes as it were of some choise sinnes only, as in *Herod*. And hience it is that the grace of the temporiser doth not continue: for as corne growing vp with twitch, briars, thornes, is at length smothered; and as wholesome meate in a stomacke full of flying choler is at length vitiated: so raigning sinne growing vp with

with these seeming graces, doth neuer cease till they be brought vp and discharged: *Luke 8.12.13.14.* Thus much to cleere that difference of graces in Gods children and others, which causeth that the falles of the one are not totall nor finall, which is incident to the condition of the other.

Now taking it as granted that the Lords children fall, by reason of the reliques of sin dwelling in them, I come to name the externall meanes, which actually bring forth into Apostasie this inbred defection. These sometime work it more violently at once, sometime successiuelly, by some heinous wasting sin, which like a strong poyson dispatcheth all quickly. Crosses repeated, and gradually increased, lures of pleasures and profits, vncomfortablenes, which accompanieth by many meanes Christian courses, (dead worke is quickly giuen ouer) examples of the multitude, a strong backbyas, by which the diuell sometimes draweth from persisting in grace, offence at the simplicitie, which to eye of flesh seemeth to be in Christian courses, at dissention in opinions amongst men of the same profession, at the sins obserued, and falls once knowne by such who make profession; the seducing calles of false Teachers, the glorious shewes of holinesse, and whatsoeuer things of this nature, by which men thorough Satans working are withdrawne.

Now followeth the third thing, the symptomes or signes of a declining soule. This one thing must be premised, lest that weake ones should cast themselues further downe by mistaking the matter. The presence of these euils, and absence of due dispositions or actions are not euill signes of a dangerously declining soule, but when they are willingly carrie without remorse,

more, renewed desires and endeouours after the contrarie: for as one may be without Gods gracious presence to his feeling, and yet not a forsaker of God; so one may be without these things, and not leauing them, but rather left of them, (Gods wisdom for many ends so dispensing) while by griefe, faith and renewed desires, he doth follow after them.

This consideration interlaced for the right vnderstanding of the matter in hand. Let this be the first signe, viz. a feeble, liuelesse action of grace willingly admitted: v. g. as when a man can performe any Christian dutie without all power spirituall and good deuotion; neuerthelesse doth not chalenge himselfe, as if it were ill with him in that regard. *Lasæ actiones lasas arguunt facultates*: As when the eye seeth not as it hath done, wee may presume the instruments or faculties are not as they haue been: So here, when we doe not things with the vigour we haue done, it is a signe of infirmitie, and a facultie inwardly or outwardly hindred: but when we can thinke well enough of this state, it is a signe of Apostacie and wilfull declining; luskish reachings are the fits forerunners commonly: Gods people declining haue fallen first to these formalities, to performance of duties in perfunctorie fashion, the heart and raines farre from the Lord, in them.

The second signe is a preposterous appetite of vnwholesome food liked well enough, no way disturbant to vs: when men can be without preaching, or at least without any that moueth their consciences; when they can extoll frothie windie stufte, which filleth the, but neuer feedeth them, so as their soules are the better for it toward God. It is a signe the man is willing

to sleepe that draweth the curtaines about him: It is a presumption, that these are willing to nappe in their finnes, that loue not such a light of truth as should awaken them. Not bearing the wholesome word is the preamble of Apostasie.

3. A third token is indigestion of that we heare, borne contentedly; when the heate of loue doth not so digest things, that they might after be distributed into the veynes of euery good word and worke: because they receiue not the truth in loue, &c. 2. Thes. 2. When meate is taken in, and passeth away not altered by the stomacke, it leaueth the body in an atrophie, that is, such a state wherein it is not nourished: So here.

4. The fourth signe is an inordinate appetite after things hurtfull & noxious: as when a man feeleth no hurt, though hee intermeddle immoderately in the cares of the world; though he intemperately quaffe in these sinfull pleasures which last but a season: when a man loues to follow the good healths, we may boldly say, hee loues to breed ill health. Worldly cares and pleasures are the things of which the soule is drunken, and surfets; these are the thornes and weedes with which the seede of graces neuer thriueth.

5. A fifth signe may be the dis-affecting of our brethren, whom wee haue acknowledged as begotten of God. The diuel cannot bring a man who hath knowne any good, to confront and despise him directly: therefore he entrencheth them with this politick traine; he teaching them first to bee bold and trample downe his image, and so at length brings them to despise God, 2. Tim. 1. 4. Demas (as it is likely) turning Apostate, forsooke the Apostle.

6. The sixth signe is, when there is felt no relictation in

in regard of our daily weaknesse and lesser sinnes, but they digest with vs: if the soule were not fallen well asleepe, it could not concoct so well. When nature (things able to prouoke taken in) maketh not resistance, her strength is feeble: So here. But when a man is growne to this, that he can goe on in his impenitencie without checke, it is an euident signe hee is downe the winde in a wilfull declination; yea that hee is farre gone in it. Thus you haue heard that some fall from their grace; and for further declaration you haue seene cleered, how farre all sorts may fall; whence cometh their falles, with the difference of them. Thirdly, what are the indicants of a soule declining.

The vse of all is; First, as to stirre vs vp to take comfort in the true worke which God hath begun; so to make sure that wee haue receiued such grace as shall not faile: would we not be loath to reare such a frame in a materiall building, which should after come downe vpon our heads? We are builders, let vs make sure to digge so deepe, and ground our worke so well, that though it should shake, (as they say, firme houses will) yet it may be farre from feare of ruine. In taking gold we refuse washed and light gold, or clipped, wee weigh them, ring them, &c. In receiuing grace be not lesse carefull that it bee right currant, not wanting a graine of due weight.

Secondly this, that many fall away, must awaken vs to more circumspection; though it light vpon some men only, it is euery mans terror. We haue great reason, for wee liue in most perillous times, wherein the holy Ghost hath warned vs that the dampe of sin shall make the loue of many waxe cold: wherein the contagion of Apostasy is epidemicall; is growne a popular disease.

disease. For now what luke-warmnes? what a vyeake pulse beateth euery where? men care not to deale with themselues to hold their thoughts to heavenly things, to awaken their affections, to renue their faith, to blow vp deuotion; to liue in an holy contention; nay this in our daies is counted a superfluous vnnecessarie course, forged in the head of some ouer-forward fellows; it is the vndiscreete feruor of greene youth, which ages wisdom will take vp. Others more moderately spoken, think that euery thing new is dainties, and that prime affections cannot be retained: a fig-leafe, nature, art, grace, goe from lesse perfect to more perfect. Whether doth a child at eight yeeres or eighteene most loue and ioy in his inheritance? Doest thou not count thy prentises two last yeeres better then foure of his first?

In stead of appetite to the word, now some thinke the Sabbath may be tollerably sanctified without any preaching: some count it enough if they bee where preaching is, let it be what it will be; farre from such as is able to worke on their soules; as if the orders of the person, not the supernaturall gifts of knowledge and wisdom made the Sermon (but these must not bee seuered): some count such plaine preaching (as heretofore was effectuell in them) lesse diligent, and lesse learned. Thus the diuell not able quite to make them cast off the ordinance, perswades them that change is no robberie; and that they may sleepe the quieter (neglecting such preaching as was powerfull in them) hee casts them this pillow, suggesting that they leaue not that which was effectuell in them toward God, but that onely which was indiligent and vnlearned.

Againe,

Againe, in stead of working the vvord vpon our affections, how many content themselues to exercise their critickes, this or that was well spoken, &c. and there is an end? For the world, men haue their hands in it elbow deepe; yea many who in their times haue made shew of a more heauenly minde, some are now so shie to their brethren, that they will not looke at them, not meete on the same side of the streete, not know them. How many, whose hearts would haue smitten them in lesser offences, can now commit as great, and it neuer vpbraids them? nay esteeme this tendernes scrupulous simplicitie, and melancholike austeritie. The more vulgar then this disease is, the more cautelous we must be.

Thirdly, wee see now that who will keepe life and power in his course, endeououring a good conscience in all things, they must passe the pikes of euill tongues which are shaken against them. For now such heare, as if they were humourists, new-fanglists, Precisians, proud, singular, simple, melancholike persons, what not? Finally, the diuell to make reuolts, now refines his vvits, and turnes Angell of light, hanging out our ovvne colours, that he may the easilier surprize vs; and pretending perfections, vvich vvee yet vvant, doth transport many, whom neither crosses nor allurements vvould preuaile against. So that vve had need, if euer, to vvalke vvarily, looking to the author and finisher of our faith: yea thankfully, that so in euill times vve are kept (though vveakly) aliue in his sight. Thus much of the second doctrine.

The third followeth in these words; *to perdition, viz. Obseruat. 3.* of the soule, 2. Pct. 2. 20. 21. euen as he that goeth out of the light, must needs come into darkenesse: so he

that leaueth the liuing God, the fountaine of blessed life, must needes fall into perdition. The relapse into any sicknesse is more dangerous, then the first entrance into it: for nature is now more enfeebled, much spent in her former resistance; againe, the disease is much strengthened as a preuailing conquerour: So in these declinings from the healthsome state of grace in some sort attained, sinne is stronger (the diuell comming with seuen worse spirits), and our capacitie of receiuing health lesser; wee being twice dead, and for the degree more remoued from grace, then euer before, and this end befalleth backsliders most deseruedly: for they offer God the greatest indignitie, it being better they had neuer admitted him, then hauing taken him in, to dislodge him causelessly. Againe, when such as forgetting their militarie Sacrament, steale from their colours, are iustly punished with temporal death; how deseruedly are these punished with eternall perdition, who respect not that warfare to which they haue bound themselves by Sacrament, who flinch away, leauing that displaied ensigne of a zealous profession, vnder which sometime they haue serued?

Obiect.

But how can destruction follow on declining courses, when Gods chosen cannot perish; and the other sort were neuer in state of saluation? *Ans.* This is said to be the end of it, not absolutely without exception, but respectiuelly, if we by repentance take not streight steppes the sooner, and get our halting healed.

Ans.

To the first it may be answered, that the Apostacie of Gods children in it selfe tendeth to destruction; it is his mercy that preuenteth them in this way, not the fruit of their back-sliding. Secondly, they after a sort destroy

destroy themselves, when they bring their spiritual life into a swoone, and leaue not themselves breath or motion discernable. For the wicked, though they neuer were thorowly vindicated or redeemed from destruction, yet to the iudgement of charitie they seemed so: now it is vsuall to speake of things not according as they are, but as they appeare. Secondly, they though they neuer had that sound eternall life, yet they had such a life as is in a wen; and though the roots of their grieffe were not brought away, yet the effects were so restrained, and for a time suspended, that to their seeming they were made well. Thirdly, they are said to fall into destruction, though they are in it; because they by Apostacie, goe to the height and consummation of it; as we are said by a godly course, to goe to life euermore lasting, which in some degree we haue already. And the truth is, that falling away doth bring the vntimely iudgements; doth procure an effectually deliuering to Satan, who doth afterwards more fully fill them with his efficacie: For as God maketh the sincerest Saints often of those, who haue been the foulest sinners: so here Satan, when hee getteth such an one, who hath been in shew an Angell of light, he doth make of him an incarnate diuell. In nature the sweetest things when they turne, become the sowrest. This so mortall sickness we must take heede of; and if our loue, zeale, tenderesse of conscience bee diminished, wee must timely seeke out for remedie. I know men thinke, we are not so farre gone; once beloued, alwaies beloued; we haue left nothing but meere curiositie, melanchollicke austeritie, men in many considerations reprobable; such as those, who ioyne not with them, we hope may be in God's fauour, and goe to heauen. But neuer
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take such paines to deceiue your selues; these vaine words will not still rocke the conscience asleepe. If thy spirituall actions be fallen asleepe, thy contention against the euill dwelling in thee ceased, thy appetite after sincere milke and meate abated, thy tendernes of conscience impaired, and thou canst sit vnder all these things without repentant sorrow; assure thy selfe, the end of this (if thou preuentest it not by repentance) shall be destruction. Luke-warmenes (though men thinke it a part of prudence) it is odious with God, and will make vs be cast vp with displeasure: true it is that Gods wrath is not presently espied against such, but that is only because we see not the spirituall iudgments, wherewith they are stricken; and we see in nature the thing is long bred and conceiued, before it is brought foorth and manifested.

Secondly, we must be exhorted here to stand constantly in our courses, who doe walke with God in some life and power, though not without great weaknes; let vs not giue ouer our labour and holy contention, to which the presence of sinne and defect of righteousness haue pricked vs: this worke of grace goeth against the streame of nature, if wee intermit to plye the oare of holy exercise, winde and tide will carrie vs backe againe. Where we cease to improue by good husbandrie the grace receiued, there it beginneth to bee impaired. True it is, that the shaking vp of our selues, resisting sloth, the restlesse aspiring after things which we are still cast from with violence, are in their kinds laborious: but remember, what men do in their earthly warfare; they (for pay of two shillings a day) march thorough places often full of difficultie, lie (the ground being their bed) in the ayre, no couert ouer them;

them; in their victuals they are so fore streightned, oftē they carrie their liues in their hands, and fight in the Canons mouth: to thinke vpon this once, is enough to make vs ashamed of our softnes and cowardice. But we are of faith, as we say, and men of courage and wisdom. But alas, first who hath these things? secondly, who doth put them foorth? thirdly, who is constant in holding them, and making shew of them as occasion is offered?

We may obserue this as a fourth instruction, what *obserrat. 4.* is the propertie of a sound beleeuers or beleefe, *viz.* to perseuere when they are tried and opposed: this faith is a pretious, sincere, neuer failing faith; it groweth from one degree to another; the true beleuer he holdeth the faith against hell gates themselves, that is, the powers of hell which oppose him in it: which that wee may more fruitfully vnderstand; wee must know that where sound faith is wrought, there the diuell plaith the assailant, bending al his force to disarme them of this diuine shield, by drawing them backe againe to vnbeleefe and false confidences which will not helpe them.

To this purpose he mustereth crosses, vomiteth deluges of false slanders; stirreth vp the neereft friends of such as are now come to God by faith, to persecute them most bitterly: sometime hee sheweth them impossibilities, in sense of seeing that they desire and beleue: sometimes hee troubleth their feelings, that so he may shake them in their beleeuing; sometimes he withdraweth their faith by false obiects, which he proposeth to them; but if hee can not breake off their beleefe, then he laieth about to repress the seruencie and the renewed exercise of their beleefe, by vnsetling vs

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with some new deuices, when wee are more intent, by making our exercise painful, and vncomfortable, overcasting the light which was wont to shine to vs in the promises; hindring vs from feeling the sweete comfort in them; exciting the reliques of sloth, deadnesse, inconstancie that are in vs: sometime by causelesse feares and sinfull shamefastnes hee withdraweth vs from our holy deuout exercise. But this sound faith quencheth all these fierie darts which are throwne against it; and like as a tree which shaken, rooteth more deeply; or like as a torch which beaten, blazeth more brightly; or like as a starre, which when the aire is obscured, shineth most cleerely: so it is with this roote, torch, this glorious starre; these powers of darknesse doe nothing in the end, but lend it a more beautifull lustre, then it euer put forth while it was not berounded with any such enmities.

True it is, that the best faith may hang the wing, being weather-beaten, and seeme to retire vnder some more vehement delaies or tentation: but that which flieth to day, fighteth againe to morrow; and like as it is with those, whose going backe helpeth them to take their rise and fetch their leape more commodiously: So here, faith (through him that is the author and finisher of her) by how much she gaue backe, by so much in her renued endeauours she commeth forward more successfully. From this ground many come to be reprobued: Some there are, who will seeme to follow sinceritie and sanctification, while making shew of these things is gainfull; but if crosses come they will lay downe their weapons, and will prouide to sleepe in whole skins, whatsoever become of other matters. Some, if they be delayed beyond their owne time,

time, cast vp their hopes, and are ready proudly to say, It is in vaine to serue God. Amongst the Lords children, how many are there who follow not faith, growing vp from faith to faith, renewing the exercise of it in fastning on the gracious promises which are made vnto vs? Men that will checke themselves if they omit the act of mercie, of testifying truth, of iustice where occasion is offered; blame not themselves for neglecting to renew their faith towards God, when his promises renewed, or experience of his goodnesse and truth doth call for it from vs.

Some there are, who weakly forespeake things, signifying their vnbeliefe, by saying, they shall neuer see this or that euill mending with them; that it is but a folly to attempt further, seeing wee striue against the streame. But this is not to be carried with full saile of faithfull perswasion on him who hath spoken good to vs, but thorough attending to that, sense and reason speaketh, to yeeld to vnbeliefe.

Secondly, wee may hence gather the truth of our beliefe. Hath it stood thorough helpe of Gods grace in tentation? Christ letteth vs see that he was our supporter, it is a true signe of grace neuer failing: buildings which stand when windes and stormes beate on them, are presumed to bee surely grounded, whereas the paper-walls and painted castles of these who haue not vnfained grace, cannot endure any sound assault which is made against them.

The last thing to be marked is, what it is that doth *Obseras. 5.* bring vs to see saluation here and euerlastingly, it is our beleefe, 1. Pet. 1. 5. Gods pleasure of working this or that for vs, is first made knowne by his word reuealing it. Secondly, it is delaied for a triall of them to

whom it is giuen. Thirdly, it is executed. Now the reuelation of this future pleasure onely faith apprehendeth; the delay (wherein many occurrences are incident) speaking the contrary this faith beareth, by cleauing to that word which formerly it heard from God. When the thing is executed, then faith is changed with sight; so that it is plaine, that faith bringeth vs to see saluation, for it neuer giueth ouer till the thing be in present; it doth keepe vs within the tower of Gods impregnable strength for the present, which is our safetie against all enemies; it doth bring vs out of all troubles by holding Gods gracious word; as a man cometh from a deepe dungeon, by climbing a scaling ladder cast to him, or sitting vpon an Eagles wing which would mount vp with him.

In the Chapter following there is a catalogue of glorious beleeuers, the end of their faith being likewise recorded. Whence we may first see that error of Papists, who though they ascribe our first forgiuenes of our sinnes to faith; yet our after-righteousnesse and saluation they referre to good workes, penall satisfactions, application of the Churches treasure, &c. withdrawing themselves from faith, when now they are brought to be in state of grace; but faith is neuer to cease till the thing beleeued be now in sight, neither will the same thing bee got both by faith and workes; for these are such as will not be compounded, the Apostle being witnesse.

Againe, hence we see how wofull a thing it is to cast away our confidence, wee fling away the plaister that should heale vs; for whatsoeuer euils were vpon vs, yet holding our faith on the truth and mercie of God in Christ, they should vanish away as shewers, which on
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our garments drie vp in time and come to nothing. Yea their danger is hence discovered, who though they make conscience of murther, adulterie, iniustice; yet care not to liue in vnbeliefe, which is of all finnes the most dangerous, for the other should not hurt vs deadly, were it not for this; that wee will not by faith take that medicine which should heale vs.

Secondly, this must incourage vs to perseuere in our faith: as Christ looked to the end of the Crosse, so must we looke to the end of our faith, that we may endure all difficulties the better, with which wee are incountred. True it is, that men are often most deceiued, where they trust most; but leaning on the Lord, and waiting on him, thou shalt neuer bee deceiued, nor misse of his promised saluation.

But in temporarie euils we cannot assure our selues *obiect.* of deliuerance. *Answ.* The truth is, we see not deliue- *Answ.* rance, because we exercise not faith in particular promises so farre as wee might. Secondly, we must euer be assured of issue, such as is ioyned with saluation. Thirdly, though it keep vs not out of the fire, yet faith will keepe vs from burning, or taking hurt in our most fierie trials; wherefore let vs renew our faith in Gods pretious promises, assuring our selues that the end of it shall be saluation of soule and body in the day of our Lord Iesus Christ. To whom with the Father and Spirit, &c. *Amen.*

FINIS.